[Translation]

Pollution in Rivers

3349. SHRI BHUWAN CHANDRA KHANDURI : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a serious problem of river water pollution in the country ;

(b) if so, the method being adopted to assess the river water pollution ; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by Government to check the problem of river water pollution in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Based on river water quality monitoring data, the Central Pollution Control Board has identified some polluted river stretches.

(b) The critical parameters for river water pollution are Dissolved Oxygen concentration (DO), Coliforme and Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD).

(c) Steps taken for control of pollution of river include :

(i) Effluent standards have been prescribed under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986;

(ii) A network of ambient water quality monitoring stations have been set up ;

(iii) Environmental guidelines have been evolved for siting and operation of industries ;

(iv) Industries have been asked to comply with consent requirements of the State Pollution Control Boards to keep the discharge of effluents and emissions within the stipulated limits ;

(v) Prosecutions have been launched against some of the industries causing river pollution;

(vi) Fiscal incentives are provided for installation of pollution control equipment ;

(vii) A scheme has been initiated to give assistance to clusters of small scale industrial units for setting up common effluent treatment plants ;

(viii) A time-bound action plan for control of pollution in highly polluting 17 categories of industries has been prepared in consultation with State Governments and a Notification has been issued under which polluting units of these categories are required to meet the standards by December 31, 1991.

New Afforestation Policy

3350. SHRI BHUWAN CHANDRA KHANDURI : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have formulated a new afforestation policy ;

(b) whether the said policy aims at plantation in the hill areas of Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh and to impose ban on felling of trees ;